

July 22, 2003

TO: Internal File

THRU: Pamela Grubaugh-Littig, Permit Supervisor

FROM: Wayne H. Western, Environmental Scientist III, Engineering
Priscilla W. Burton, Environmental Scientist III, Soils
Dana Dean, P.E., Environmental Scientist III, Hydrology

RE: Technical Field Visit For Phase III Bond Release for Sweet's Pond, Mountain Coal Company, Gordon Creek 2, 7, & 8, C/007/016

Other Attendees: Vicky Miller, Mountain Coal Company
Chris Hansen, Mountain Coal Company
Dan Guy, Blackhawk Engineering (Consultant)
Mitch Rollings OSM
Steve Falk, BLM
Pam Grubaugh-Littig DOGM
Dana Dean DOGM
Jerriann Ernsten DOGM
Priscilla Burton DOGM
Wayne Western DOGM

Date & Time: May 22, 2003
Arrive 10:30 AM departed 10:55 AM

PURPOSE:

To conduct a Phase III bond release inspection for the Sweet's Pond area. Sweet's Pond is an isolated area of the Gordon Creek 2, 7 & 8 Mine that was reclaimed about thirteen years ago. The area was originally used to provide water for the mine. Ms. Agnes Pierce (the landowner) requested that the site remain "as is" for her use. Ms. Pierce holds the water rights.

OBSERVATIONS:

The total site is approximately 2.5 acres, including the access road and pump house. The fenced and vegetated pond area is about 1.5 acres. Water flows from the adjacent stream into the pond and returns to the stream by the emergency spillway. At the time of the inspection, the pond was full and water was flowing over the spillway. Mr. Dan Guy indicated that the pond was approximately 8 feet deep. The pump and pipes appear to be in good working order but were not tested. The Permittee did not know whether there was still power to the site.

Dan Guy gave brief history of the site. Most interesting was the fact that the pond was stocked with rainbow trout at one time. Apparently, the stream feeding the fish has never had fish life, but the rainbow trout thrived before being completely removed by fishermen. Mr. Guy indicated that the pond was in good working order.

Chris Hansen stated that the landowner had requested the site be left as is for water access. As the pond is isolated from the rest of the site and has met the vegetation and other requirements, there is no reason to keep the pond in the permit area. Wayne Western then said that the Division had approved a change in the postmining land use so that the pond could be retained. In addition, the Division's staff has reviewed the bond release application and found that it met the minimum regulatory requirements.

After the presentations were given, everyone was given the opportunity to speak. The consensus of the group was that there were no on the ground problems.

RECOMMENDATIONS/CONCLUSIONS:

The Division should proceed with Phase III bond release at Sweet's Pond.